

# how to look for a summer job

Looking for a summer job is a job in itself. The ideas and guidelines in this booklet can help you tackle that job properly. Job opportunities for students will be harder than ever to find this summer, so read this booklet carefully. Use it. And start looking for that summer job today.

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# **the time to start looking is right now**

It's never too early to start looking for a summer job. The summer job market is a tough one and most of the good jobs are gone by spring. So when you start looking early you have a better chance of getting the job you want. You can't trust luck, or anyone other than yourself to find a summer job for you. It's up to you.

# how to start looking in the right direction

The best way to get started is to organize yourself. Here is a list of things you should be doing now. And don't do just one, do them all. That way you'll be covering every angle.

1. Get a *Social Insurance card*, if you don't already have one. Pick up an application form at your local Unemployment Insurance Commission office, or have them mail one to you. Complete the form and mail it immediately. (There is an explanatory pamphlet available with the form that will tell you how to fill it in correctly.) You'll receive your card in one to five weeks.
2. Make a *list of your skills*. Write down all the things you've learned to do that could get you a job—like typing or mechanical skills. Then add all the things you're good at—like mathematics, languages or physics. Include any hobbies that you have as well. List characteristics you feel would be job assets. And be honest with yourself. Now, write down the jobs you could fill, and would like to do for the summer, based on the list.
3. Use every working person you know as a *job connection*. They can really help. Make a list of relatives, friends and neighbours. Ask them if the companies they work for hire students for the summer. Get them to check with their friends and acquaintances. And don't be afraid to ask. No one will know you're looking if you don't tell them.
4. Use your school or college placement centre. They'll tell you which companies have contacted them looking for student summer help. And often they can give you tips on the best way of approaching those companies.
5. Talk to your guidance counsellor, if your school doesn't have a placement centre. Counsellors are in the job business, and they can help you find out where the available jobs are.

6. *Read the want ads in the newspapers every day.* Look first under "Part Time" and "Seasonal Help Wanted". But check all the help wanted columns too. Don't be put off by ads specifying experienced help. If you feel you can do the job, then apply for it. And phone prospective employers *right away*.

7. *Check with your local Canada Manpower Centre.* Many have student placement bureaus that will save you a lot of time. Not only that, but large cities have offices located in different areas, specializing in jobs close by.

8. *Call previous employers.* If you worked for a company last summer, give them a call to see if they're hiring again this year and would take you back. If not, ask them if they know of any companies that would be hiring or could suggest any new contacts for you.

9. *Don't wait.* As soon as you hear of something, check it out. You won't be the only student applying for that job.

# how to apply for the job you want

Get in touch with any companies you would like to work for, even if they haven't advertised for summer help. In most cases the best approach is a letter of application (which is discussed in the next section). It's a great way to introduce yourself because you can take the time to express yourself well. If you don't know who should receive your letter, phone the company and ask for the name of the employment or personnel manager. If there isn't one, tell the switchboard operator why you're calling and ask for the name of the person to contact.

A couple of days after you've sent the letter, follow it up with a phone call. Ask if it has been received and if you can arrange an interview. If that company isn't hiring, ask them if they can tell you who is.

Going after a job in places like stores, restaurants, and gas stations can sometimes call for a different approach. Usually the best way to apply is to visit them. Speak to the manager, and explain you're a student looking for summer employment. Since this is a face-to-face situation it's important that you present yourself as best as you can. First impressions really do count. That's why you should look neat and go alone. Bring a resume with you and leave it with the manager. (The next section tells you how to get your resume together.)

There is one very important point to keep in mind. Don't be discouraged if the place you contact isn't hiring until later on. Use it to your advantage. How? Simply by applying a little organization. Keep a calendar marked with the names of the companies you contacted, the date, and the person with whom you spoke. And don't forget to mark on the calendar the date they will be hiring. When that day rolls around, get in touch with them again. And make sure you tell them you applied earlier and when. Your persistence and organization can work in your favour.

Above all, don't put off contacting places. There are going to be a lot of other people after the same jobs this summer, so get there as early as you can. The sooner you look, the better you look.

# application letters and resumes are important

Well-written application letters and resumes are a big part of applying for any summer job. You'll find books in the library that give guidelines on writing business letters. Or ask a teacher or guidance counsellor to help you. Here's an example of a typical application letter.

## SAMPLE

21 Home Terrace  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 1B4

February 10, 1977

Mr. David Jones  
Employment Manager  
Acme Manufacturing  
207 Industrial Parkway  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2A 2B5

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am a grade thirteen student interested in working for your company during the summer vacation. Your company was suggested to me by Mr. Andrew Smith of your marketing department.

At present, I am studying mathematics and sciences at Central Collegiate Institute in Ottawa. Next September, I will be attending Bytown University as a computer sciences student. I will be nineteen years of age on June 6th.

During previous summers I have worked as a flagman with a road construction crew, as a counsellor at a boys' summer camp and salesman in a department store. You will find additional information on the attached resume.

My hobbies include the Ottawa Citizen's Band radio club, football, basketball and hockey.

I hope you will find my resume of interest to you, and that you will consider me for summer employment.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain.

Yours sincerely,

*Gerry Philips*  
Gerry Philips

Keep it simple. Your application letter should be clear and concise. Briefly state everything an employer would ask you about yourself. Basic facts include your name, age, address, education and any previous working experience. Remember the list you drew up of your skills and talents? Include a few of those if you think they'll help you get the job.

If possible type the letter. If not, make sure your writing is neat and legible. Remember, the employer is actually meeting you for the first time, even if it is just on paper. So your letter should be the best one you can write.

One important note—always address your application letter to a specific person. Again, if you don't know who that person is, phone the company and ask. That way, you'll be sure your letter reaches the right person as soon as possible.

Now, your resume. It's a detailed profile of you. And it's absolutely necessary if you seriously want a job with any company. You should send one with every letter and take one with you to every interview. The sample resume will show you how to prepare yours. And don't forget to make it as neat and clean as you possibly can.

1. Your name, address, postal code, telephone number.
2. PERSONAL DATA: Age, and birthdate. Include your height and weight. Mention any serious health problems which could affect your work.
3. OCCUPATIONAL GOAL: As briefly as possible, state what you want to do when you're finished school.
4. EDUCATION: State what school you attend, your course, year or grade and how your marks are in general. If you've ever won any scholarships or awards mention them, explaining why you received them.
5. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Include any clubs, organizations etc. with which you are involved. An employer can tell a lot about you from the things you like to do.
6. WORK EXPERIENCE: As clearly and as briefly as possible, outline any jobs you have held. State the year, your position and the company. If you've never had a job with a business before, don't worry. Include anything you ever did to make money.

**7. REFERENCES:** An employer won't always require references, but it's a good idea to include them in your resume. Then you have them if you need them. Teachers and former employers are best. (Anyone you ever worked for is a former employer, including anyone who hired you to babysit, garden etc.) Always get permission from the people you wish to list. And when you have sent your resumes out, tell your references which companies might be calling them. Oh yes, relatives don't count as references.

You can use a copying machine at school or the library to make duplicates of your resume. That way you only have to type it once. But always retype your application letter, since it is always a personal approach to specific interviews.

To sum up, application letters and resumes are quite simple to do, providing you follow a plan and use common sense and complete honesty. All you have to do now is sit down and write them.

## SAMPLE RESUME

Gerry Philips  
21 Home Terrace  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 1B4  
231-0000

### PERSONAL DATA:

Age: 18	Birthdate: June 6, 1958
Height: 6'1"	Weight: 175 lbs.
Health: Excellent	

### OCCUPATIONAL GOAL:

My goal is to attend University and study computer sciences, with the eventual aim of becoming a systems analyst.

### EDUCATION:

Public School: Graduated 4th in class.  
Secondary School: Central Collegiate Institute.  
Grades: Good to excellent in all mathematics and sciences.  
Average in languages, history.

### EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Treasurer of Science Club, member of Ottawa Citizen's Band Radio Club, member of basketball, football and hockey teams.

### WORK EXPERIENCE:

Summer, 1976—Salesman in Metro Department store.  
Summer, 1975—Counsellor, Boys' Camp, Isle of Pines.  
Summer, 1974—Flagman, Road Construction.

### REFERENCES:

Mr. Peter Brown, Manager, Metro Department Store,  
Ottawa. 231-1234.

Sam Andrews, Head Counsellor, Boys' Camp—268-0000.

# in an interview, make the most of yourself

If you've never been to one before, interviews can be scary things. But, by really preparing yourself for them you'll come out ahead. Here are the steps you should take to make the most of yourself in your interview.

1. *Schedule as many as you can.* The more often you go, the easier it gets. If there's a particular job you'd really like, try and schedule a few other interviews before that one. By the time you get to it you'll feel more confident. But don't leave it too long or you may miss the job.
2. *Get the company's correct name and address.* Call the day before your interview and just double check to make sure you have it right. If you're not sure how to get there, ask for directions. And while you're at it, check your appointment time and the name of the person you're to see.
3. *Give yourself plenty of time to get there.* The worst thing you could do is show up late. So leave for your interview in good time to get there. It doesn't hurt to be early.
4. *Know something about the company.* Find out a few basic facts like what they do, and how long they've been in business. Your placement office or guidance counsellor can help there. It'll show you're interested.
5. *Look neat.* There's no way around it—first impressions are important. The way you dress reflects your attitude. If you look neat and clean then that's the way you'll work. Besides, if you know you look okay, then you'll feel okay. And that gives you one less thing to worry about.
6. *Expect to fill out an application form.* Even if you've sent your letter and brought your resume you'll probably be asked to complete an application form. Use the information from your resume, and make sure you bring your Social Insurance Card. Complete the application neatly. If there's something you're not sure about, ask your interviewer to explain.

7. *Have your answers ready* to questions like...“Tell me about yourself.” or “Why would you like to work for this company?” That’s where your resume comes in really handy. Give it to your interviewer when you come in and he can ask you more direct questions than the two above.

8. *Talk to your interviewer.* He’s interested in what you have to say. If not, you wouldn’t be there. Ask questions about the company, the best way to tackle your job, your wages and hours etc. Keep notes, using your own paper and pen. And remember, there is no such thing as a stupid question. So don’t be afraid of asking.

9. *Be enthusiastic.* You don’t have to come on like a tornado, but make it clear that you really want the job. Your enthusiasm will show if you follow the first eight steps. And it should show. If you’re not enthusiastic about getting the job, you can’t expect anyone to be enthusiastic about giving it to you.

# make your summer job work for you

Congratulations, you got your summer job. You worked hard to get it...so work just as hard to keep it. Be on time, do the best job you possibly can. And use your summer job to *your* advantage. It’ll be a new experience for you, and one in which you can learn a lot. Use your new knowledge to help you find a summer job next year, or even a lifetime career.

# be your own boss

If all else fails, and you can't find a job, create your own. It isn't as hard as it sounds. As a matter of fact, you can make money and enjoy it. You can babysit, or cut grass...but if you use your imagination you can expand those jobs and come up with others. You can make money doing services for people that they can't or don't want to do themselves. Here are a few examples:

- plantsitting or petsitting for people on vacation
- window washing
- painting houses
- gardening
- housecleaning
- dressmaking
- carwashing

The basic rule of thumb is this—if you're good at something, use those talents to make some money this summer. Once you've decided what you want to do, advertise. Put a notice on your supermarket bulletin board, and canvass the neighbourhood door-to-door. Tell all your neighbours about it and ask them to spread the word. If you've used imagination and a little ingenuity, the results may surprise you.

Good Luck!

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# everything you need to do

Use this checklist to make sure you're doing  
thing possible to look for your summer job.

- Read this booklet thoroughly.
- Get your Social Insurance Card.
- Make a list of your skills and attributes.
- Make a list of the jobs you'd like to do, and the companies to ask.
- Tell every working person you know that you're looking for a job.
- Visit your school placement centre or guidance counsellor.
- Read the newspaper want ads, every day.
- Visit your local Canada Manpower Centre office.
- Call previous employers.
- Write your application letters and resume.
- Send letters or pay a visit to every place you want to work.
- Follow up your letters with a phone call.
- Prepare your job-hunt calendar and keep it up to date.
- Prepare yourself thoroughly for your interviews.

## Ontario Youth Secretariat

This government organization is your voice at Queen's Park. The people in the Secretariat have prepared this booklet to help you find a summer job. If you pick up any extra tips about looking for and finding a summer job, please pass them along.



Ontario

Ontario Youth Secretariat  
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Honourable Margaret Birch  
Provincial Secretary  
For Social Development